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1. The Problem

This paper¹ deals with long-term civilizing processes in Elias's sense of the term. The expression »long-term« is here intended to cover a period stretching from the middle-ages to the nineteenth century – from the »feudal« pre-history of the European system of states to the Industrial Revolution and the nation-state. »Civilizing processes« refers to all the fundamental structural changes that, at the same time, result in relatively stable institutions and personality structures. European development has led to an ever more tightly woven net of »affective controls« and, through various stages of this development, has exerted a constant pressure on the individual to turn to more refined and more reflected ways of self-steering. Although rules do not lead automatically to putting more pressure on the individual – they are also designed to avoid it – societal constraints often take a heavy toll of the average person. This may appear as the price members of more civilized societies have to pay for their higher standard of living and their higher level of physical security.

These processes have taken many different forms and have been »caused« by quite different constellations. Here I want to stress primarily those connected with the formation and further development of so-called »survival units« – here: of states. But economic processes can also shape personality-structures and should not be neglected here. Why compare England (or later: Britain) with Austria (here: the core countries of the Habsburg monarchy in Central Europe) for the purpose of studying civilizing processes? Besides the practical reasons – European integration gives a lot of them – there are also some more remote theoretical ones. While England was one of the birth-places of ›modernity‹, with a developed, industrialized market economy, parliamentary democracy and, since the middle of the 18th century, a global hegemonial power, the Habsburg Monarchy seemed to lag behind in nearly all respects.

To many observers, its people and institutions appeared also very strange. As Claudio Magris in his book on the *Habsburg myth in Austrian literature* shows, foreign observers were often baffled by the Byzantine character of the late monarchy, by the politeness of their bureaucrats, the Chinese fixedness of its order. Like China, it sometimes regarded itself as a kind of centre of the world. Things have changed since then, but the shadow of the monarchy is still looming large on »Mitteleuropa« – particularly if one compares the violent present with the quiet-orderly past. Others, most of them Austrians, saw a baroque irreality in it. The Austrian official was one characteristic figure, the other was the pleasure-seeking, music-loving, wine-drinking and chicken-eating hedonist. But many saw the monarchy as a »Völkerkerker«, a prison of the peoples, and until recently it has been regarded as a variant of Eastern absolutism (from Marx and Engels to modern theorists like P. Anderson). English civil society, the gentleman-politician from the landed classes who appears in the world of Trollope, but also English utilitarianism, the figure of the merchant and banker formed models also for the Austrians themselves. To many observers, the typically English character was the gentleman with his reserve, his self-control, sense of fairness (male qualities dominate!) and self-assuredness. The end of the 20th century sees both societies reduced. The successor-states of the Habsburg empire are small and powerless, Britain's status is no longer that of a great power. Economically, a globalization process has occurred – large multinational enterprises, a dramatic new kind of technological revolution have transformed the shape of the industrial landscape. Modern personality structures, shaped by anonymous market or state-bureaucracies have been said to dominate now – the market-character, the narcissistic personality. Is convergence to modernity irresistible? Is surveillance everywhere the same? Or do different societies still rely on their different forms of ›habitus‹? How do they cope with the new pressures from modernity? To answer all these questions, it is useful to study different civilizing processes carefully and to explain them in their historical context.

The argument is as follows. Firstly, we deal with the feudal period of both societies, in which modern statehood was formed. Secondly, the »dynastic early modern state« is regarded and finally, we deal with the industrialized nation-state stage, which was not exactly Austria's. Methodically, we follow largely Elias' comments on both societies; where this is not possible and where the arguments seem to be lacking in scope or empirical detail, they are complemented and

corrected. I try to combine macro-levels – those of economic entanglement and inter-state competition – with internal developments (of and between units of dominance – between the strata) with the level of ›habitus‹-formation. What can be offered here, is only a rough draft, a sketch, since there is not time for more. But the details can be fitted in easily.

2. The feudal origins of state and society in Austria and England

Elias' main works² dealt with the development of France. After the breakdown of the Carolingian empire, a highly centralized state emerges gradually, in which the court is the most important institution to shape upper-class models of behaviour. Not only does it help to generate a refined, diplomatically-cautious and softly-civilized nobility, but it also influences, directly or indirectly, even bourgeois formations. The courtly heritage has become, according to Elias, a strong and vivacious component of French national character, forming it to this day. How does this model apply to England and Austria?

Elias' own analysis of England does not reach that of France in terms of scope and empirical detail. But there are some remarks that concentrate on the differences between English, French and German feudalism. There is an English history of parliamentarianism opposed to France's way into absolutism: The ›royal mechanism‹ is not fully effective in the English case. Why? Elias offers a number of reasons.

2 Cf. Elias, Norbert: *The Civilizing Process* [1939]. Vol. I: *The History of Manners*. Oxford: Blackwell 1978. Vol. II: *State Formation and Civilization*. Oxford: Blackwell 1982; Ders.: *The Court Society* [1969]. Oxford: Blackwell 1983.

3 Cf. Elias' *Excursus on some differences in the paths of development of England, France and Germany* in: Ders. 1982, pp. 96-104.

4 Cf. Elias, Norbert: *Thomas Morus' Staatskritik*. In: Voßkamp, Wilhelm (Hg.): *Utopieforschung. Interdisziplinäre Studien zur neuzeitlichen Utopie*. Vol. II. Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp 1985, pp. 101-150.

5 Cf. Elton, Geoffrey: *The English*. Oxford/UK, Cambridge/USA: Blackwell 1992, pp. 29-68. – Elton summarizes the discussion of continuist vs. discontinuist interpretations of the Norman conquest concerning the introduction of the feudal system and the subjection by foreign invaders by giving both positions their due – the Norman rulers inherited the monopoly of regular taxation, but their will was much more effective than that of the Anglo-Saxon kings, also in terms of administration, recruitment of troops and law-enforcement.

6 Cf. Sweezy, Paul et al. (Eds.): *The Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism*. London: New Left Books 1976; Moore, Barrington: *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*. Boston: Beacon Pr. 1966.

7 Cf. Macfarlane, Alan: *The Origins of English Individualism*. Oxford: Blackwell 1978. Macfarlane refers to the tradition of Maitland.

- England did not experience the knock-out competition of territorial rulers as in France or the Holy Roman Empire, at least since the Norman conquest, but was, instead, early centralized, largely because of the small size of the territory.³
- The early centralization meant also a monopoly of taxation at a time long before it could be enforced in France.
- The ruling nobility was relatively homogeneous in terms of their interest and was soon able to turn against the central lord, thus laying the foundations for the later parliamentarization process.
- For a long time, England appeared as not more than a semi-colonial area that belonged to the West-Frankish crown, in competition with other territorial rulers there.
- Only after her elimination in the contest for the French crown, did England become ›insular‹; but it was a country already thoroughly centralized and pacified.
- Both the ›monopoly-mechanism‹ and the ›royal-mechanism‹ developed differently in England: While in France the rise of the town, of the monetary sector and the town-based merchants and craftsmen led to an unstable balance of these groups with the land-possessing warrior-caste and the king, in England, those classes formed a coalition with the aristocracy and were, thus, able to limit royal power. (Although, in Elias' opinion, Tudor-rule comes quite close to the absolutist model.)
- Under Henry VIII, the merchants of the city of London were still far inferior to the wealthy land-owning classes.⁴

Elias' perspective should be complemented by acknowledging an important role for economic processes and institutional developments, particularly those of law and law-enforcement.

- Even before the Norman conquest, England seems to have been a relatively wealthy and pacified territory, richer than Normandy, where the new rulers came from.⁵
- Marxists have always turned their attention to the early transformation of Feudalism into a market-oriented rural economy.⁶
- One of the aspects of this transformation is the shift in the relationship between the lord of the manor, tenants and yeomanry. There was a development towards greater personal freedom, the absence of personal services and increased spatial mobility.
- In Elias' account of Feudalism, the law and institutions of law-enforcement are lacking English individualism seems to have been also bound to common law⁷, with highly developed property rights, social mobility and the particular position of the rural family already in the thirteenth century.
- English law and the penitentiary system differed from most of the continent in more than one respect. Rooted in Germanic folk law, it was more equalitarian and never fully usurped by the lord of the manor as it was on the continent with its draconic practices of torture and physi-

8 Cf. Weber, Max: *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*. Tübingen: JCB Mohr (Paul Siebeck) 1980, pp. 456; Parsons, Talcott: *The System of Modern Societies*. Englewood Cliffs/NJ: Prentice-Hall 1971.

9 Cf. Anderson, Perry: *Lineages of the Absolutist State*. London: New Left Books 1974.

10 Cf. again Weber 1980, pp. 762.

11 Cf. Stone, Lawrence: *The Crisis of the Aristocracy, 1558-1641*. Oxford: Clarendon 1965; Gerstenberger, Heide: *Subjektlose Gewalt. Theorie der Entstehung bürgerlicher Staatsgewalt*. Münster: Westfäl. Dampfboot 1990, p. 81.

12 Cf. Hintze, Otto: *Gesammelte Abhandlungen*. Bd. 1: *Staat und Verfassung*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht 1962, p. 59, p. 72; Anderson 1974 and also Elias, Norbert: *Studien über die Deutschen*. Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp 1989, p. 68.

13 Cf. for the interdependence of burden of taxation, involvement in wars, size of the navy Mann, Michael: *The Sources of Social Power*. Vol. I: *A History of Power from the Beginning to AD 1760*. Cambridge, New York, Melbourne: Cambridge UP 1986, p. 451; for the Tudor-revolution of administration cf. Elton 1992, p. 126.

14 Elias, Norbert: *Mozart. Zur Soziologie eines Genies*. Hg. v. Michael Schröter. Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp 1991.

15 For the genesis of the concept of »Austria« cf. Zöllner, Erich: *Der Österreichbegriff. Formen und Wandlungen in der Geschichte*. Wien: Verl. f. Gesch. u. Pol. 1988.

16 Taylor, Allan J.P.: *The Habsburg Monarchy 1809-1918 [1948]*. Harmondsworth: Penguin 1990, p. 12.

17 Cf. Elias 1982: *Excursus*.

18 Cf. Bruckmüller, Ernst: *Sozialgeschichte Österreichs*. Wien, München: Herold 1985, p. 136.

19 Cf. Sieder, Reinhard: *Sozialgeschichte der Familie*. Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp 1987, p. 28.

cal punishment. This point was stressed by various authors, among them Weber, Parsons and Macfarlane.⁸ This helps also to explain the different role of the English »gentry«. Its members performed important functions in the system of justice and administration— as Anderson mentions.⁹ But, in contrast to much of the continent, they depended both on the patronized lower classes and the central authority of the king.

- f) The role of the town differed in England¹⁰ from that in France or the Holy Roman Empire. It was not autonomous and armed and English democracy does not appear to be based on urban democratic patterns (like in the Low Countries) but on estate assemblies of landed classes.
- g) The English aristocracy was the first to lose its military function. Around 1500, peers still used to be armed, in the 1580s, only 50% were experienced in warfare and in the 1650s the English aristocracy was without a military function.¹¹ The reasons for this seem to be manifold: commercialization, an undisputed monopoly of taxation, reliance on the navy as the main weapon in state-competition,¹² and the relative effectiveness of central administration since the early Tudor-reforms.¹³

The difference to Austria is enormous. Elias has not published much about the Habsburg monarchy, with the exception of his *Mozart*-book.¹⁴ But for the explanation of the feudal stage, much of what Elias has said about the Holy Roman Empire can be used for Austria. »Austria« is here the term for the complex of territories that sprang from the linkage of the »*Erbländer*« (Austria in the narrower sense of the term, Styria, Carinthia, Tyrol, which largely form today's Austria), Bohemia and Hungary after the death of the Hungarian-Bohemian king on the battlefield against the Turks in 1526.¹⁵ The other parts of the Habsburg monarchy are excluded here, since they do not fulfil the criterion of a high degree of inner interdependence. (As one witty observer maintained, in most countries, the dynasty is an episode in the life of the peoples, but in Austria, it is the other way around.)¹⁶

Since the Bavarian colonisation of that area, which later formed the German-speaking part of Austria and until the unification in 1526 the region was essentially ruled by the dynamics of feudal competition and the »monopoly-mechanism« as described in Elias' *Civilizing Process*. In addition, much of what he said about the Germans can be applied here:

- a) It was a settlement-zone of Germans, Slavs, Romanic peoples and there was a sandwich-situation of being caught between aggressive powers from the South-East (Hungarians, Turks) and the West (particularly, France and other German states). No wonder that the differences to England abound.
- b) Not until the stage of »*Landesbildung*«, the formation of larger territories that split from the Empire in a centrifugal process, in the 13th century, feudal anarchy and violence were subdued (in 1273, the Habsburgs gained part of them and had to struggle hard before they became undisputed leaders of the region, for the purpose of creating a »*Hausmacht*«, a large, secure territorial basis for the struggle against other princes in the Empire).
- c) The power-ratio of the armed aristocracy remained high for a long time, central taxation used to hit the strong resistance of estate-assemblies everywhere. As Elias also says, the Habsburgs, as German emperors in a huge area, were always in the situation of lacking financial resources. Their obligations which resulted from the competition on a larger, European scale, led normally to financial ruin and blackmail by the various diets.¹⁷
- d) Economically, the peasantry was caught in a status of personal dependence (though in a mixture of various forms) without producing for markets to the same extent as in England. Although Austria saw an improvement in rural conditions towards the late middle-ages¹⁸, it still lagged behind and a lapse back into serfdom occurred in the 16th century, with excessive personal services and feudal rents.
- e) The rural family developed strictly hierarchical relationships within the family household – creating a social stratum below the level of the peasantry and consisting largely of people of non-kin origin.¹⁹
- f) Partly as a consequence of the Turkish invasions (since around 1470), the feudal burdens multiplied in some areas (Styria, for instance), partly because of the consolidating power of the lord of the manor.
- g) Law and law-enforcement were, as a result of the centrifugal tendencies in the Holy Roman Empire, extremely split. Patrimonial courts diminished the rights of the ancient Germanic



20 Cf. again Bruckmüller 1985, p. 136, for the incredible manifoldness of the feudal institutions.

folk assemblies and usurped the monopoly of jurisdiction and physical punishment in all »severe« cases.²⁰ In the process of centralization, the princes tried to get control of this institution. The hierarchical character was rather strengthened.

- h) Towns and rural communities developed at quite different paces and two quite contrasting patterns of civilization emerged.
- i) The aristocracy remained a closed warrior-class for much longer than in England and was, thus, essentially feudal.
- j) The »royal-mechanism« was less effective than in France, since the feudal estates were in a relatively strong position – the prince or emperor depended more on them than the other way around.

Summarizing the differences, one can say that the English had made more progress on the way towards impersonal rule both politically and economically, while Austria, sharing many of the continental patterns of Feudalism, was additionally burdened with her geo-strategical position. The South-Eastern flank was open and represented a constant threat until the 18th century – on a scale other than the threat posed by the Scots. This also meant disruption of long-distance trade links and caused – since the late 15th century – economic backwardness. On the other hand, these developments gave the aristocracy a high power-ratio that could turn against the peasantry which increasingly became rebellious in Early Modernity.

3. State-Formation and Civilization in Early Modernity

For Elias, there exists an English counterpart to the French civilizing process. Instead of a »courtization of warriors«, we find a »sportization« of the landed aristocracy. For him, this is indeed a central development. According to Elias, there is an elective affinity between Parliament and sport. In one »civilizing thrust«, the English gentleman learned to be »fair« in peaceful sporting events and to bow to self-imposed rules of political conduct in Parliament. »Civilizing«²¹ means here in a rather pure form the control of destructive violence and of feelings of hate while the threshold of shame and embarrassment advanced and sublimation in sporting contests, peacefully accepting controversial positions and opinions in the political arena. Essential elements of Elias' argument are:

- a) Former civilizing thrusts in the same direction.
- b) The fact that there was a »gentry«, a lower aristocracy which emerged and found its place between urban craftsmen and merchants on the one hand, the landed nobility on the other.
- c) This led to an exchange of rural patterns of living with those of the capital, through the London »season« of the higher aristocracy, a house in the country and a house in the city formed part of this way of life.
- d) After the cruel Civil War between »roundheads« and »cavaliers«, the restoration period led to a rather unlikely calming down of a cycle of violence.
- e) That this de-escalation became effective, had partly to do with the common class basis of »Whigs« and »Tories«, of which they represented only factions, not opposing classes.
- f) They managed to steer away from violence by learning to control strong feelings of fear and hate.
- g) These landed classes could feel secure because they had also no reason to fear the farmers - enclosures had broken the bone of their resistance.
- h) Landed classes enjoyed a high power-ratio which enabled them to control the king, the town's guilds and the Puritans.
- i) The resulting self-pacification of a ruling oligarchy led to personality-structures which facilitated obeying the rules. Peaceful persuasion replaced dagger or sword. A typically English »habitus« emerged.
- j) There is a link of this development with state and state-competition: English monarchs did not dispose of a standing army, but relied, instead, on a navy.²² It was an efficient weapon in state-competition, but could not be used against the population (differing from Prussia and France). Neither army nor police were strong enough for that.²³
- k) For Elias, the gentry represents a group of bourgeois land-owners. Its formation led to constant exchanges between upper- and middle-class patterns of behaviour.

21 Cf. Elias, Norbert/ Dunning, Eric: Quest for Excitement. Sport and Leisure in the Civilizing Process. Oxford: Blackwell 1986.

22 Cf. also Elias, Norbert: Studies in the Genesis of the Naval Profession. In: British Journal of Sociology, 1/4 (1950), pp. 291-309.

23 Cf. Elias 1982, p. 484; Ders. 1989, p. 212.

24 Cf. Elton 1992.

25 Cf. Hill, Christopher: *Reformation to Industrial Revolution* [1967]. Harmondsworth: Penguin 1969 (The Pelican Economic History of Britain 2). – Hill tries to explain the unique English triumph of capitalism before its industrial stage and gives the political revolution an important causal weight.

26 Cf. Heal, Felicity: *Hospitality in Early Modern England*. Oxford: Clarendon 1990.

27 Cf. Russell, Conrad: *The Causes for the English Civil War*. Oxford: Clarendon 1990.

28 Cf. Elias 1989, p. 12.

29 Cf. Heer, Friedrich: *Der Kampf um die österreichische Identität*. Wien, Köln, Graz: Böhlau 1981, pp. 40-87, for a passionate and thorough description of the struggle between Reformation and Counter-Reformation in Austria.

Parliamentarism means also the absence of Absolutism. Elias' explanation for this deviation from the ›royal mechanism‹ is not the only one to flourish in the literature. Competing explanations include:

- a) There was much continuity between the compromise of king and parliament in the 16th century (with its centralizing steps under Cromwell) and the solution following the Civil War (Elton).²⁴
- b) The role of rural capitalism and the emergence of bourgeois classes is seen differently (B. Moore, Chr. Hill, T. Parsons, P. Anderson).²⁵
- c) The Protestant work-ethic (Weber) might complement the gentleman-stock of models in the formation of an English ›habitus‹. The English national character might also contain the market-related component of utilitaristic calculation, Puritan asceticism; a gloomy and sour middle-class morality, directed against sensual pleasures of all kind can be seen as result of a second civilizing process. Aristocratic magnanimity and hospitality stands against a heartless self-help mentality; the degeneration of ›hospitality‹ has also been recently found by social historians (F. Heal).²⁶
- d) Not contradicting Elias, but rather supplementing him is C. Russell's suggested interpretation of the Civil War, wherein he rejects the idea of a (teleological) ›bourgeois revolution‹ completely and stresses its unintended and accidental character, placing it in the context of the English striving for supremacy over its celtic neighbours.²⁷

Nevertheless, England had become, by the turn of the eighteenth century, an example of a relatively liberal, tolerant and pluralistic nation-state, not endangered by foreign attacks but, instead, gaining its first colonial empire.

Austria was very different. While England steered her way towards a constitutional nation-state with a free play of market forces and political pluralism (though still in a ›one-class society‹, according to P. Laslett), Austria's two basic patterns pointed to another direction: During the Counter-Reformation, Protestantism was successfully fought. More than one century later, ›Enlightened Despotism‹ was to emerge.

In more than one respect it differs also from Germany. The Habsburg-monarchy was certainly more a court society than the politically split petty states of the Empire, as Elias also repeatedly maintains. Vienna was an Imperial capital, whose baroque-hedonist aristocratic and folk-culture was in contrast to much of Protestant Germany with her literary bourgeois culture, confounding there the typically German opposition between ›Zivilisation‹ and ›Kultur‹. After the Thirty-Years War, Germany was indeed powerless and pauperized, as Elias stresses²⁸, but for multinational Austria, years of triumph and great-power status were to come (particularly after the victory over the Turks – the splendour of Austria's ecclesiastical and worldly palaces is an indicator of that). In some respect, Elias' interpretation seems to be biased – Prusso-centric, ›klein-deutsch‹ and Protestant. The distinctive quality of Austria's culture seems to be underrated.

What now corresponds in Austria to English parliamentarization and commercialization, to the gentleman and the Puritan element in the English character? What were her central ›mints‹ to shape typical modulations of the ›affective household‹? How did they depend on factors from outside (state-competition) and from within (economic, structures of dominance and surveillance between the ruling and the ruled)?

- a) The first deeply penetrating and affect-moulding, specifically Austrian, civilizing process occurred with Catholic Counter-Reformation.²⁹ It still shapes Austria, in greeting habits, in architecture, in styles of thinking. The Jesuits were highly effective in their mode of thought control; they were the first to systematically socialize and train for obedience and loyalty toward the dynasty and the early modern state. Their means included schools, baroque plays, Catholic rituals of all kind – for instance, pilgrimages – which helped to erect the clerical pillar of dynastic rule.

But, as Heer maintains, the pressures from the Counter-Reformation (after a nearly complete victory of Protestantism in Styria, Austria, Bohemia and even Hungary) did not result from the strength of Habsburg rule, but rather from its weaknesses. The simultaneous danger from foreign powers and Reformation led to alliances with Spain, the papacy, with con-

30 Cf. Kann, Robert A.: Geschichte des Habsburgerreiches 1526-1918. Wien, Köln, Graz: Böhlau 1982 (Geschichte d. Donauraumes 4), p. 37.

31 Cf. Heer 1981, p. 17; Evans, Robert J.W.: Das Werden der Habsburgermonarchie 1550-1700. Wien, Köln, Graz: Böhlau 1986, p. 149.

32 Cf. Bruckmüller 1985, p. 276; Axtmann, Roland: »Police« and the Formation of the Modern State. Legal and Ideological Assumptions on State Capacity in the Austrian Lands of the Habsburg Empire, 1500-1800. In: German History 10 (1992), pp. 39-61.

33 Ibid. – Bruckmüller stresses the differences to France: The Habsburg rulers were simply not rich enough to reward their nobility and, thus, to tie them to their court like the French kings. The high nobility received, instead, the right to exploit their peasants (particularly in Bohemia after 1619, the main place of a »Second Serfdom« (Perry Anderson), or were guaranteed monopolies and did not have to pay taxes.

34 Cf. Kann 1982, pp. 150-225; Bruckmüller 1985.

35 Cf. Magris, Claudio: Der habsburgische Mythos in der österreichischen Literatur [1966]. Salzburg: Otto Müller 1988.

servative Bavaria and put Austria under largely Romanic influence.

Centralization was slow, ineffective and all »councils« and »chancelleries« for the Empire or the Habsburg countries themselves quickly became overly extended and clumsy bodies – a striking contrast to England, the early nation-state.

Since 1526 – when Bohemia and Hungary fell under Habsburg rule – the heterogeneity and openness of the system were unique. This unification was already partly accidental, partly caused by the Turkish threat and partly the result of the dynastic striving for power (indeed, these explanations do not exclude one another³⁰). Even in German speaking Austria alone, there were, according to Heer, two or more political religions, two nations, two or more cultures. The result was a polyphone, multicoloured, universal and multinational baroque culture,³¹ which was belonging neither to a nation nor to a political whole, but rather to a fluctuating balance between various powers and principles.

Nevertheless, the practices of rule included more and more techniques of systematic policing, in the comprehensive sense of early modern times and in a marked contrast to England, appeared as a generalization and rationalization of patrimonial (feudal) techniques of rule.³² New methods of surveillance replaced the older, less successful ways. The numerous peasant-revolts in the Habsburg countries had no counterpart in market-oriented England.

- b) The second process is a more familiar one – Graz, Innsbruck, Prague and later Vienna became centres of court-societies; but only after a certain period and never as complete as Versailles.³³ Since the estates were so strong, Austrian absolutism was rather weak. Some territories could never be fully incorporated into the Habsburg sphere of rule, like Hungary, which used to spend rather than bring money. The reality of Austrian absolutism was its painstaking search for compromises, which may have played a larger role in forming the Austrian character of today, as much as the politeness of the courtier.

Militarily, Austria had always severe problems in defending her status as a great power. Lack of money was chronic. She was soon destined to be a defensive power, never, in contrast to Prussia, an offensive one. (Although the military was always a central institution, the spirit of the monarchy was pacifist – another marked contrast to Elias' picture of Germany.) This is also a huge difference, compared to self-confident England, even today.

- c) The third civilizing process is, like the very violent process of Re-Catholicization, a result of both state-competition and internal pressures. In the former case, the struggle for supremacy in the Empire or, in Europe (ignoring the centuries of defense against the Ottoman empire), enforced a strengthening of the state apparatus via Counter-Reformation. The first really effective and modern state was to rise from the pressures of the real danger of annihilation of the Habsburg monarchy after 1740, when Frederick II from Prussia, France and Bavaria simultaneously attacked Maria-Theresia. »Enlightened Despotism« or, as Austrians call it, »Enlightened Absolutism« meant both a strengthening of administrative power (centralization of administration and police, taxation of the aristocracy, re-organization and enlargement of the army, secularization, reformation of censorship etc.) and a civilizing thrust according to Western norms (reform of the institutions of jurisdiction and law-enforcement, e.g. abolition of torture and physical punishment, protection of the peasants, liberalization of the economy, abolition of tolls, introduction of obligatory schools etc.).³⁴

These administrative reforms created, somewhat belatedly, a real state (Bohemia and Austria proper were united; Hungary, which had been never part of the Holy Roman Empire, was a different case). In this process, the central mint of an Austrian »habitus« was formed: the bureaucracy, as a generalized and rationalized patrimonialism (»Kameralismus«). This development was in marked contrast to North-Western conceptions of a Civil Society, of a gradually and spontaneously evolving economic and political order. Under Joseph II, a secularized, loyal body of officials was formed, which remained until 1918 the backbone of the monarchy, together with the supra-national army. It was to create the main element of what was later to be called the »Habsburg Myth«³⁵: The Austrian official represented a world of benevolent order, of honesty, of paternalistic humanism and supra-nationalism, of loyalty toward the person of the emperor. But he was also caught in a permanent state of »muddling through«, lacked strength of decision, with massive self-restraint and caution, leading to immobilism.

36 Cf. Bodi, Leslie: *Tauwetter in Wien. Zur Prosa der österreichischen Aufklärung 1781-1795*. Wien, Köln, Graz: Böhlau 21995.

37 In Austria, the law of administration and the members of the legal professions in state-service have always been more important than those of Civil Law; the logic of the market has always been subordinated to that of the state. – Cf. Acham, Karl: *Nachwort: Sonnenfels und seine Zeit – eine Vergegenwärtigung*. In: Joseph von Sonnenfels. *Aufklärung als Sozialpolitik. Ausgewählte Schriften aus den Jahren 1764-1798*. Hg. u. eingel. v. Hildegard Kremers. Mit einem Nachw. v. Karl Acham. Wien, Köln, Weimar: Böhlau 1994 (Klass. Stud. z. sozialwissensch. Theorie, Weltanschauungslehre u. Wissenschaftsforsch. 10), pp. 227-247.

38 Cf. Gellner, Ernest: *Nations and Nationalism*. Oxford: Blackwell [Cambridge: Cambridge UP] 1990 [EA: Oxford: Blackwell u. Cornell UP 1983], pp. 8-18.

39 Cf. Elias 1989, p. 211, p. 361 u. p. 418; Ders.: *Die öffentliche Meinung in England*. Bad Homburg, Berlin, Zürich: Dr. Max Gehlen 1960; Ders.: *Nationale Eigentümlichkeiten der englischen öffentlichen Meinung*, Bad Homburg et al.: Dr. Max Gehlen 1961.

40 Cf. Hobsbawm, Eric J.: *Soziale Ungleichheit und Klassenstrukturen in England: Die Arbeiterklasse*. In: Wehler, Hans-Ulrich (Hg.): *Klassen in der europäischen Sozialgeschichte*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht 1979, pp. 53-65. – Hobsbawm speaks about three nations he had found in the England of the Second World War; Tiddick, Kathryn: *Empire and the English Character* [1990]. London: Taurus&Co. 1992; Barnett, Correlli: *The Audit of War. The Illusion and Reality of Britain as a Great Nation*. London: Macmillan 1986.

41 Here, Elias made a mistake: Austria had left the Holy Roman Empire in 1804, as a consequence of the French War (because of the role of the German princes in the *Rheinbund* during the war with revolutionary France); the Habsburgs had taken the Austrian Imperial crown in 1806. – Cf. Elias 1989, p. 11.

One further element of this code is, what has been called »comic ambivalence« and »doublethink«³⁶ as attitudes towards authority – first, of officials, but later, of the Austrian character itself. These traits emerged as reaction forms against close bureaucratic surveillance and rigid censorship particularly, when the nearly revolutionary character of the Josephine reforms was broken by the reactionary and restorative period following the French revolution and the Napoleonic wars.

These reforms were, thus, Janus-headed; civilizing processes under the aegis of the state. They mixed patrimonial dependence with the art of administration, by making compromises with all groups and societal forces – a technique that has survived even until today. Its present name is »*Sozialpartnerschaft*« – a corporatist model of political bargaining and governing.³⁷

4. The Habsburg Monarchy and Britain in the developmental stage of the nation-state. Concluding remarks

When the era of the industrialized nation-state arrived, the differences between North-Western and Central Europe were large. Like Elias, we can say that both societies had gone through deep structural transformations, i.e. civilizing processes, but indeed of a quite different kind. In England, parliamentarianism was accompanied and facilitated by a high degree of self-restraint on the personal level, by individualization and tolerance in public and political affairs. Contrastingly, Austria shaped personalities which needed guidance from above, although this authoritarianism was not indifferent to the needs and interests of the governed. But unlike Elias, we can say that some of the central differences between these two societies were a result also of differences in the path and scope of economic development. Of course, the economy is always linked to and shaped by the political framework. England was the first Western society to overcome the famines so common in much of rural Europe, and it was thoroughly penetrated by the market-system even before the Industrial Revolution. The puritanical elements in the English character are a consequence of these factors. In Central Europe, people were less affluent and thus, also, less civilized. The rural population remained caught in the hardships of a hostile nature for much longer. Peasant life was risky, hard and dangerous. Therefore, the Habsburg Monarchy also resembles Gellner's »agro-literate societies«³⁸, with a small literate class controlling a rather backward economy. This is the sociological meaning of the so-called »*Hofratsnation*« – a nation of »court councillors«, or high bureaucrats.

Elias partly takes these economic factors into account when he describes the »modern« English character³⁹ (referring to the Fifties of this century, but also to its nineteenth-century origins). His arguments deal with three aspects:

- England appears here – in contrast to Germany – as a particularly well integrated nation-state, the English as a people with deep feelings of national loyalty, high national pride and a realistic »We-image«.
- The English national character is unusually homogeneous, regions and classes do not hide the common »Englishness« or »Britishness« (even the Celts share it to some extent).
- English politics is controlled by public opinion to a high degree. Humanistic middle-class codes and canons have limited Machiavellistic nationalism and inappropriate police-power.

Although contemporary social criticism would regard the English class system, British colonialism (with its »indirect rule«) in the past and the British economy in the present neither as sufficiently modern nor civilized enough⁴⁰, we might be inclined to accept Elias' judgement by and large. He is certainly correct when stressing some of the causes for the different English path into modernity. These include the unbroken continuity of the central English institutions, since England had not had to experience foreign conquest and occupation since the battle of Hastings; her lack of a peasantry in the Continental sense; the early development of the City of London with its overmighty influence on social habits.

In nearly every respect, Austria was different.

- The triumph of the nation-state created massive problems for the Austro-Hungarian Empire (after the defeat by Prussia 1866⁴¹, the so-called »*Ausgleich*« had become reality). National »We-feelings« of the more than twelve ethnic groups that lived within the boundaries of the

42 Cf. Kann 1982, p. 399; Taylor 1990, who stresses the inevitability of the dissolution. Kann is more cautious on this point. The question: suicide or murder of the Monarchy is not yet completely resolved.

43 Cf. Heer 1981, pp. 211-320.

Monarchy conflicted massively with the Empire-patriotism and dynastic loyalty of army and bureaucracy⁴². Lost wars and inner turmoil also reduced collective pride and self-assuredness.

- b) Austria was, even in 1914, largely agrarian, ethnically heterogeneous and also regionally extremely divergent.
- c) While the Monarchy moved also towards constitution and democracy, her feudal and etatist heritage was certainly a hindrance, but so too was the struggle of the nationalities. Political parties formed quite closed »Lager« (political »camps«), which fought against each other passionately and without the calm self-control of British members of Parliament. If English parliamentarianism had owed part of its success to the homogeneity of the landed classes, this factor was certainly lacking in the Monarchy. Authoritarianism was often a logical result.

But Austria also differed from Germany. Unlike Prussian-dominated Germany, it never developed a »good society« according to the criterion of »Satisfaktionsfähigkeit«, although the duel was common among the higher ranks of the army. There was also no aggressive, militarized code of conduct which was shown by Elias to exist in the German middle-classes after the foundation of the new nation-state in 1870. And the Austrian ruling classes – the multinational aristocracy and the top of the bureaucracy – adopted always a more relaxed style of demonstrating and exercising their authority than the comparable groups of the »newcomer« Germany. Somewhat surprisingly, the Austrian ruling classes resembled in this regard a bit to their English counterpart – without visible assertiveness, with an inclination to compromise and preferring under-statement to efficiency.

But lacking the homogeneity of the nation-state, the Monarchy was weak in the inter-state competition. Her inner troubles resulted in a dangerous immobilism. The only and most dramatic step forward, in 1914, proved to be lethally fatal. Her space of manoeuvring had already shrunk gradually by her alliance with Germany.⁴³ The nation-state competition resulted in a war which destroyed a political order that had lasted for centuries.

England survived it as a great, though reduced, power. For the small successor-state »Austria«, the most traumatic situation that could have been imagined had become reality. A period of real lack of identity had begun.